

Noise Troubleshooting

Electrical Noise Problems

Noise is one of the most difficult problems to diagnose. Electrical noise can enter a system in many different ways and falls into one of two categories, conducted or radiated. It may be difficult to determine how the noise is entering the system but the corrective actions for either of the types of noise problems are similar.

- Conducted noise is when the electrical interference is introduced into the system by way of an attached wire, panel connection, etc. It may enter through an I/O module, a power supply connection, the communication ground connection, or the chassis ground connection.
- Radiated noise is when the electrical interference is introduced into the system without a direct electrical connection, much in the same manner as radio waves.

Reducing Electrical Noise

While electrical noise cannot be eliminated it can be reduced to a level that will not affect the system.

- Most noise problems result from improper grounding of the system. A good earth ground can be the single most effective way to correct noise problems. If a ground is not available, install a ground rod as close to the system as possible. Insure all ground wires are single point grounds and are not daisy chained from one device to another. Ground metal enclosures around the system. A loose wire is no more than a large antenna waiting to introduce noise into the system; therefore, you should tighten all connections in your system. Loose ground wires are more susceptible to noise than the other wires in your system. Review Chapter 2 Installation, Wiring, and Specifications if you have questions regarding how to ground your system.
- Electrical noise can enter the system through the power source for the CPU and I/O. Installing a isolation transformer for all AC sources can correct this problem. DC sources should be well grounded good quality supplies. Switching DC power supplies commonly generate more noise than linear supplies.
- Separate input wiring from output wiring. Never run I/O wiring close to high voltage wiring.